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=====| Touch Type Tutor |=====
=====| for Windows |=====
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===== [ C O N T E N T S ] =====
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1. Specification
2. System requirements
3. Revision history
4. Program self-check
5. USER GUIDE
 - 5.1 Quick install
 - 5.2 Starting program
 - 5.3 Menu selection
 - 5.4 File menu
 - 5.5 Speed menu
 - 5.6 Tutorial menu
 - 5.7 Game menu
 - 5.8 Options menu
 - 5.9 Help menu
 - 5.10 Notes on typing
 - 5.11 How Touch Type Tutor works
6. Registration
7. Registration form
8. Methods of payment
9. User license
10. Distribution license
11. Disclaimer of warranty
12. Association of Shareware Professionals

=====[1. SPECIFICATION]=====

Super easy-to-use TOUCH TYPING TUTOR for Windows 3.X. Whether you want to rate a professional typist's speed or learn to touch type from scratch, this program has it all! Intelligently customizes to learner's skill level, ensuring the fastest learning curve. Suitable for individual use, for teachers and for employers.

Features include:

SPEED MODE

Is designed for typists and companies to measure typing speeds.

TUTORIAL MODE

Has eight graduated lessons and adapts itself automatically to the users skill level. Bar graphs showing progress are automatically available after each set of lessons.

GAME MODE

Presents a random series of characters in the form of a game, forcing the user to type faster and faster to win.

=====[2. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS]=====

This software requires an IBM PC with Windows 3.0 or later. Memory and disk space usage is minimal.

=====[3. REVISION HISTORY]=====

1.0 Sep 01 1992 Baseline version.

=====[4. PROGRAM SELF-CHECK]=====

This software provides a measure of protection for itself against accidental

corruption during downloads from bulletin boards or in the event of disk malfunction. A self-check is performed when the program starts up and will notify the user upon failure.

Note that the program must be run from the directory where it resides or the self-check will fail. Following the directions for QUICK INSTALL will ensure correct start up operation.

Possible causes of the self-check error message include the following:

1. Defective distribution disk. A certain percentage of disks are damaged in the mail due to poor handling or magnetic fields. Results of poor handling, e.g. bending or sleeve damage are usually visible.
2. Bad download from a BBS. This is usually apparent when the program files are de-compressed, e.g. using ZIP format, since the ZIP itself will detect any corruption during de-compression.
3. Virus infection. There may already be a virus on your machine which infects any new programs as soon as they are run. There are numerous shareware virus detection and prevention packages available and their use is highly recommended.

=====[5. USER GUIDE]=====

=====[5.1 QUICK INSTALL]=====

To install and start Touch Type Tutor:

1. Use the Windows File Manager to create a directory called TTTWIN and copy the contents of the distribution disk into it. (If you downloaded TTTWIN from a bulletin board, unzip the archive file into the TTTWIN directory).
2. In the Windows Program Manager create an icon as follows:
Click on whichever group into which you wish to place TTTWIN, usually the "Windows Applications" group. Select "File/New" from the Program Manager main menu. Select "Program item" and hit OK. Enter the description as, say "Touch Type Tutor" and the command line as "C:\TTTWIN\TTTWIN.EXE". Hit OK.
3. The TTTWIN icon will now appear in the group you selected and you can start Touch Type Tutor by double clicking on this icon.
4. On starting Touch Type Tutor, read the HELP OVERVIEW to get to know the three modes of operation, namely SPEED test, TUTORIAL and GAME mode. You will need to select FILE/NEW in the Touch Type Tutor main menu before you can use the TUTORIAL mode.

=====[5.2 STARTING
PROGRAM]=====

Install Touch Type Tutor following the directions under QUICK INSTALL above.
To start the program, double click on the Touch Type Tutor icon.

=====[5.3 MENU SELECTION]=====

The program may be operated with or without a mouse. Each menu item has an underlined character for selection without a mouse. Certain menu items also have "accelerator" keys for quick selection without a mouse. These are FILE/OPEN, OPTION/BEEPER and OPTION/STATUS BAR. The accelerator keys can be found alongside the relevant menu items.

=====[5.4 FILE MENU]=====

NEW create a new personal history file for a student. You are prompted for your name which can be any text up to 30 characters. The history file is used primarily to record the results of lessons completed in TUTORIAL mode and is written to after the final screen of a lesson is completed. It also stores the current environment selected in Touch Type Tutor. The environment consists of whether the beeper is enabled, whether the status bar is visible, the number of screens in a lesson, the words per minute threshold to advance to a new lesson and the currently selected skill level in GAME mode. The environment is written to the history file when Touch Type Tutor is closed or a new history file is opened.

OPEN open an existing student history file. All files must have previously been created with NEW (see above).

TIDY allows you to rename or delete a student file. You can change a student name, for example to correct a spelling mistake. The delete function allows for the temporary creation of a history file for the purpose of storing the student name for a speed test. This would be useful for, say, personnel companies who wish to test many typist applicants and store their speed results with their name for later retrieval using the RESULTS DISPLAY feature. After the test, the temporary history file can be deleted.

EXIT close Touch Type Tutor. If you have opened or created a new history file your current environment will be saved automatically and restored next time you start Touch Type Tutor and open your existing history file. For a description of the environment contents, see NEW above.

===== [5.5 SPEED MENU] =====

SPEED test is an easy way of measuring the speed of a typist using selectable styles of text in various categories. This mode does assume some basic proficiency at touch typing. The typist is allowed to practice with a few lines of text before the proper measurement takes place.

On completion of the test your results will be displayed in a dialog box and also saved to disk in a file called RESULTS, see RESULTS DISPLAY below.

Before selecting START TEST select from the following styles:

- GENERAL general style of text to test your speed.
- LEGAL legal style of text to test your speed.
- MEDICAL medical style of text to test your speed.
- TECHNO computer style of text to test your speed.
- CUSTOM custom style of text for you to define.

DEFINE this option allows you to modify the contents of the custom style file. A simple editor appears which allows you either to type in new text from scratch or paste in text from some other file you may wish to use.

The name of the custom style file is CUSTOM.TTX and you may edit this file using another editor of your choice, for example the Windows Notepad editor, if you wish. If you use a word processor to edit this file, remember to save it as straight ASCII with no embedded word processing commands. The Touch Type Tutor built-in editor has the advantage of automatically wrapping words to keep an appropriate line length. The text will be reformatted before it is presented for typing so there is no need to add new lines, unless blank lines are required. To add a new line press Control-M. See your Windows user guide for instructions on how to cut and paste text from the clip board or Notepad.

RESULTS DISPLAY you can review all the previous speed test results in reverse date order. Speed, accuracy and the date and time of the test are displayed, together with the student name if a history file was open. (See the discussion under FILE/TIDY above for the creation of temporary student files for the purpose of recording names in the speed test results).

===== [5.6 TUTORIAL MENU] =====

TUTORIAL mode presents a graduated series of lessons to enable anyone to learn to touch type. It does not assume any prior skill but will adapt itself to the proficiency of the user. Before you can select the TUTORIAL mode you must either create a new student history file or open an existing one. See the description for NEW in the FILE MENU above.

You will be presented with a series of lessons which gradually introduce more keys from the keyboard. The computer assesses your progress at the end of each session and decides whether it is time to promote you to the next lesson. The SHIFT key is not introduced until lesson 8. Until then all characters are presented in lower case. After lesson 8 you must use the SHIFT key as needed.

During any particular lesson the computer assesses your performance with each character and starts feeding you sentences designed to give you more practice with your slowest and most error-prone keys. In this way you will always be practicing in the most efficient way (i.e. by practicing your worst keys). The downside of this is that you may not feel you are progressing, indeed your speed may get worse during the lesson. In the long run, however, your typing should improve faster than if you just practised random sentences.

The results of previous tutorial lessons, referred to as HISTORY FILE are available from the OPTIONS menu. You can review your progress to date using Touch Type Tutor which shows your lesson, speed, accuracy and the date you completed the lesson.

A bargraph is shown after each screen showing your relative performance on each key. Only keys which take part in the lesson are highlighted. One block is shown for each mistake made for a key, and also as a measure of the time taken to press the key. At the end of a lesson a chart is drawn showing your performance in words per minute throughout each screen of the lesson.

The mistakes and timings for each key are averaged out since most keys will be used more than once in a screen. The blocks used to show relative timing among the keys are normalized and do not indicate any specific time value.

WPM THRESHOLD this option allows you to change the speed needed to progress to the next lesson in the tutorial. If your speed matches or exceeds this value after completing all the screens of a lesson then you will be promoted to the next lesson. A value of 30 words per minute has been found appropriate to provide a challenging goal for a fast learner, however you may select a higher or a lower value to suit your own pace. The lower the value, the faster you will progress. If you set the value too high, you may become frustrated by not seeming to progress fast enough. On the other hand, setting the value too low may give you a false sense of achievement and cause you to complete the course without actually learning to touch type properly. Your selection will be remembered next time you start Touch Type Tutor.

NUMBER OF SCREENS changes the number of screens that make up a lesson in the Tutorial Menu. When you have completed all the screens for a lesson

the results will be written to your history file on the disk. The value is not critical and can be adjusted to suit the amount of time you wish to spend per session. A low value may give a false sense of achievement, however. A value of six screens per lesson has been found suitable for most attention spans. Your selection will be remembered next time you start Touch Type Tutor.

FORCE LESSON NUMBER allows you to change the lesson number currently set for you in the TUTORIAL mode. Forcing the lesson number will disrupt your learning progression but is provided for completeness.

If you are unable to reach the required speed to progress through the lessons, a better way is to change the speed required for promotion to the next lesson. (See the WPM THRESHOLD option above).

FINGER PLACEMENT three sub-menu items are available to help with finger placement on the keyboard. These can be called up at any time. If you have a tutorial screen in progress, press Space, Enter or Escape to dismiss the picture and return to your typing. Alternatively, you can select a new menu item.

HOME KEYS shows a picture of the keyboard with the home keys highlighted. The home keys are so-called because while typing your fingers should always return to rest on these keys. The picture includes a description of how to place your fingers on the home keys.

THIS LESSON shows a picture of the keyboard with the new keys for this lesson highlighted. A list of keys with finger positions is also presented. This option is grayed if tutorial mode is not active.

ANY KEY this provides a handy reminder for which finger should be used to press which key. Again, a picture of the keyboard is shown with keys and instructions highlighted as you press a key.

HISTORY DISPLAY prints your history file on the screen. The history file is written every time you complete all the screens of a lesson. It shows the lesson number, the speed and accuracy you attained and the date for each completed lesson, starting with the latest.

Your lesson results are only written at the completion of all the screens of a lesson. This option is grayed if tutorial mode is not active.

===== [5.7 GAME MENU] =====

GAME mode is designed to help you familiarize with finger placement as well as provide some light hearted relief.

This simple game is designed to teach both familiarity with the positions of keys and also to encourage consistency of typing speed. The key to winning

this game is to type consistently while gradually increasing your speed.

The object of the game is to move the person who seems to be trapped on a moving conveyor belt heading toward a rather fearsome looking spear. You notice a white letter appear above the person and that typing the letter allows the person to jump away from the spear. As more letters take its place, you can type them until the person makes it all the way to the left end of the belt and thus to safety. You may also notice, however that the belt seems to get faster too, and the spear gets closer and closer.

Select a suitable skill level that provides a reasonable challenge.

=====[5.8 OPTIONS MENU]=====

BEEPER this toggles the state of the beeper used to signal when you make a mistake. The current state of the beeper is on if this menu item is checked. You can toggle the state of the beeper at any time either by selecting the menu with a mouse or by pressing the accelerator key F2.

STATUS BAR this toggles the state of the status bar line at the bottom of the screen. The status bar will be visible if this menu item is checked. You can toggle the state of status bar at any time either by selecting the menu with a mouse or by pressing the accelerator key F3. The status bar is not shown in GAME mode. The status bar shows the current lesson (if tutorial mode is currently in progress), the current speed and accuracy and the state of the beeper.

=====[5.9 HELP MENU]=====

The HELP menu offers various topics for quick reminders of how to operate Touch Type Tutor. Help is available at all times by selecting this menu. Some of the topics from the HELP menu are also presented in context via a HELP button which appears on several dialog boxes.

=====[5.10 NOTES ON TYPING]=====

In both the SPEED mode and TUTORIAL mode the clock will not start timing your responses until you type the first character. On making a mistake, you must re-type the correct character before you will be allowed to continue. If the BEEPER is enabled a beep will sound whenever you type an incorrect character.

Do not use the DELETE or BACKSPACE key to correct your mistake, simply type the correct character.

At the end of a line you may hit Enter, as if using a typewriter, or the Spacebar, as if using a word processor. Do not hit space or Enter after the last sentence; your results will be processed as soon as the last character is typed correctly.

The Touch Type Tutor window can be resized as appropriate, however do not make the width much less than the default width or some of the sentences may be cut off. The height of the window can be changed at will since any sentences off-screen will be scrolled automatically as you reach them.

While typing you can optionally switch the beeper ON or OFF quickly using the F2 function key. You may abort a session early by hitting the ESC key at any time but if you do so your speed will not be calculated.

The status bar at the bottom of the screen shows your current speed and accuracy as you are typing. If you find this distracting, hit F3 at any time to remove it.

=====[5.11 HOW TOUCH TYPE TUTOR WORKS]=====

There are several ways to check your typing against the sentences generated. One is to simply match letter for letter what you type versus what you should have typed. This can prove disastrous if you get "out of sync" with the sentence. For example if you type an extra letter such as in "commputer" when you should have typed "computer", your text will appear wrong for every letter typed after that until you happen to notice what happened and get back in sync. The same thing can happen if you type too few letters. Other computer typing tutors adopt this approach which proves annoying and less than satisfactory.

Another way is to try to automatically re-synchronize the matching up of letters and words that you typed after you make a mistake. This would be the ideal, however it is not foolproof and can just as easily go wrong, especially if characters, a whole word or even a whole sentence were accidentally missed. This is one area where a human operator will be able to spot where the mistake was made far more easily than a computer program.

The method Touch Type Tutor adopts is to force the synchronization. In other words, you can't continue after a mistake until you type the correct letter. Only one mistake is counted for each occurrence however, so the total number of mistakes will be correct. Although the flow of typing is interrupted by this approach, this was felt to be preferable to presenting possibly incorrect statistics by method two above, and the annoying run-on problem of method one.

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===== Touch Type Tutor =====
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